

FOUNDATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS

Descriptions and learning criteria for each of the Foundation and Knowledge Domain areas within General Education are listed here.

Foundations

Writing and Speaking (GWS)

In Writing and Speaking (GWS) courses, students do more than improve their abilities to communicate information clearly. They learn to set forth arguments persuasively and well, both orally and in writing. Students should emerge from their GWS courses as more accomplished writers and speakers, competent in a wide variety of settings.

To help students achieve GWS goals, the University provides GWS courses and an appropriate learning environment that will:

- provide opportunities for students to become increasingly effective communicators as they enter new contexts and address new audiences;
- provide opportunities for students to become increasingly accomplished in written, oral, digital, and visual communication.

GWS Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Writing and Speaking requirements, students will have increased their abilities to:

- demonstrate rhetorical and analytical skills as they explore, compose, interpret, and present a variety of texts;
- communicate effectively and persuasively to a range of audiences;
- demonstrate capacities for critical thinking, listening, and generating ideas;
- demonstrate proficiency in composing processes;
- employ the conventions of both spoken and written communication with sensitivity to context and venue.

Quantification (GQ)

In Quantification (GQ) fields, students practice and master basic mathematical and statistical skills of lifelong value in solving real-world problems. Students should learn to apply mathematical skills appropriate to solve such problems.

To help students achieve GQ goals and master foundational quantification skills, the university provides GQ coursework and an appropriate learning environment that will:

- provide experience in assessing and interpreting quantitative data and information;
- guide students to recognize patterns, establish relations, exercise conceptual thinking, develop problem-solving skills, and think logically and critically;
- support students in their efforts to draw accurate and useful conclusions; make informed decisions based on quantitative analysis; and use basic mathematical and statistical skills to solve conceptual problems.

GQ Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Quantification (GQ) requirement, students should have increased their abilities to:

- use mathematical, statistical, or computational models, principles, and processes to integrate, synthesize, generalize, or make judgments about real-world problems;
- recognize patterns, establish mathematical relations, apply problem-solving skills, and think logically and critically;
- develop, explore, analyze, and reason about multi-variable relationships using quantitative tools;
- use probability to reason and make judgments based on data that exhibit variability;
- communicate and explain mathematical and statistical ideas.

Knowledge Domains

Arts (GA)

In Arts fields (GA), students focus on exploring or creating works of art. Students should become familiar with the importance of significant creative works, the traditions and history associated with those works, and the important role that the arts play as expressions of the cultural values of society and the human condition.

To help students achieve GA goals, the University provides GA courses and an appropriate learning environment with purposeful engagement with the arts and creative works for students to:

- encounter and become conversant with the terminologies, techniques, practices, knowledge, and skills employed by the arts;
- gain a comprehension of the role that the arts play as expressions of the cultural values of society and the human condition;
- expand their knowledge of the variety of expressions and experiences that are provided through the arts;
- develop competencies in interpreting and critically evaluating diverse expressions in the arts.

GA Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Arts (GA) requirement, students should be able to:

- explain the methods of inquiry in arts fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas;
- demonstrate expanded knowledge and comprehension of the role that the arts play in various aspects of human endeavor;
- demonstrate competence in the creation of works of art and design;
- demonstrate competence in analysis, critical thinking and interpretive reasoning through the exploration of creative works;
- identify and explain the aesthetic, historical, social, and cultural significance of important works of art and critically assess creative works, their own or others', through evaluative processes of analysis and interpretation.

Humanities (GH)

In Humanities (GH) fields, students focus on exploring important works of literature, history, religion, philosophy, and other closely related forms of cultural expression, thereby broadening their understanding of diverse ways of seeing, thinking about, and experiencing the self and society. Students will enlarge their intellectual horizons and knowledge of the world through encountering humanistic representations of both lived experiences and imaginative or speculative constructions, past or present. Students thus become increasingly prepared to live as thoughtfully engaged members of multiple communities, whether local, regional, or global.

To help students achieve GH goals, the University provides GH courses and an appropriate learning environment for students to:

- engage in the qualitative study of the humanities;
- expand their knowledge of the variety of human experiences;
- gain access to various intellectual traditions and their changes through time;
- probe the foundations of communication and thought and become aware of the scope and limitations of human communication;
- encounter concepts and traditions that attempt to bring sense to human existence;
- develop their competency in interpreting and critically evaluating diverse ways of life, traditions, and shared or individual values, including their own.

GH Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Humanities (GH) requirement, students should have increased their abilities to:

- explain the methods of inquiry in humanities fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas;
- demonstrate competence in critical thinking about topics and texts in the humanities through clear and well-reasoned responses;
- critically evaluate texts in the humanities – whether verbal, visual, or digital – and identify and explain moral or ethical dimensions within the disciplines of the humanities;
- demonstrate knowledge of major cultural currents, issues, and developments through time, including evidence of exposure to unfamiliar material that challenges their curiosity and stretches their intellectual range;
- become familiar with groups, individuals, ideas, or events that have influenced the experiences and values of different communities.

Health and Wellness (GHW)

In Health and Wellness (GHW) fields, students focus on the physical and psychosocial well-being of individuals and communities. They expand their theoretical and practical knowledge about health and wellness – concepts that are multidimensional and culturally defined. The University provides opportunities for students to study such diverse topics as nutrition, physical activity, stress, sleep, healthy leisure, alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use, sexual health, and safety – all useful in maintaining lifelong health and wellness and in creating healthy work and community environments.

To help students achieve GHW goals, the University provides GHW courses and an appropriate learning environment for students to:

- Identify and practice skills, attitudes, and behaviors that should enable them to better maintain health and wellness across their lifespans
- Identify wellness as a positive state of well-being, not merely the absence of disease or illness
- Recognize the importance of social, emotional, and physical health and wellness for communities as well as for individuals.

GHW Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Health and Wellness (GHW) requirement, students should have increased their abilities to:

- explain the methods of inquiry in Health and Wellness fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas;
- describe multiple perceptions and dimensions of health and wellness (emotional, spiritual, environmental, physical, social, intellectual, and occupational);
- identify and explain ways individuals and/or communities can achieve and maintain health and wellness;
- describe health-related risk factors and explain changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, activities or skills that have the potential of improving health and wellness;
- disseminate knowledge about health and wellness and demonstrate behavioral practices needed to engage in healthy living across the lifespan.

Natural Sciences (GN)

In Natural Science (GN) fields, students develop the skills necessary to make informed judgments about scientific information and arguments. Along with building knowledge of foundational scientific principles, students expand their understanding of how and why science works, why it is an effective tool for knowledge generation, and how it can address contemporary questions and challenges.

To help students achieve GN goals and develop this scientific literacy, the University provides GN courses and an appropriate learning environment for students to:

- encounter the order, diversity, and beauty of nature;
- sample some of the ways which science offers additional lens through which to view the human condition;
- engage with scientific material through discussion, exploration, data analysis, and experimentation;
- gain practice in recognizing the nature of scientific process and discovery, in identifying what science can and cannot achieve, and analyzing why scientific arguments may lead to different conclusions than other forms of intellectual discourse.

GN Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education (GN) requirement, students should have increased their abilities to:

- explain the methods of inquiry in the natural science fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas;
- construct evidence-based explanations of natural phenomena;
- demonstrate informed understandings of scientific claims and their applications;
- evaluate the quality of the data, methods, and inferences used to generate scientific knowledge;
- identify societal or philosophical implications of discoveries in the natural sciences, as well as their potential to address contemporary problems.

Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)

In Social and Behavioral Science (GS) fields, students focus on analyzing the forces that influence behaviors, values, habits, attitudes, and institutions. GS courses allow students to explore the multiple perspectives and methodologies useful in analyzing and addressing complex social issues.

To help students achieve GS goals, the university provides GS courses and an appropriate learning environment for students to:

- explore the interrelationships of the many factors that shape behavior;
- be introduced to methodological analyses of the forms, practices, and theories of politics, economics, and social institutions;
- develop comprehensive, integrated, reasoned, and theoretical views of their contemporary and emerging social worlds;
- expand their understanding of how social, political, and economic influences and trends affect individual, group, organizational, local, national, and global contexts.

GS Student Learning Criteria

Upon successful completion of the General Education Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS) requirement, students should have increased their abilities to:

- explain the various methods of inquiry used in the social and behavioral sciences and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas;
- identify and explain major foundational theories and bodies of work in a particular area of social and behavioral sciences;
- describe the ways in which many different factors may interact to influence behaviors and/or institutions in historical or contemporary settings;
- explain how social and behavioral science researchers use concepts, theoretical models, and data to better understand and address world problems;
- recognize social, cultural, political and/or ethical implications of work in the social and behavioral sciences.